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INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 000653

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FOR EAP/MTS AND G/TIP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/11/2012

TAGS: PHUM PGOV PREL KCRM MY

SUBJECT: MALAYSIA'S CABINET APPROVES DRAFT TIP LAW

Classified By: Political Section Chief Mark D. Clark, reasons 1.4 (b and d).

¶1. (SBU) Ambassador-at-Large Ghazzali S.A. Khalid telephoned the Ambassador on April 11 in order to inform him that the Malaysian Cabinet, in its meeting earlier in the day, had approved the draft anti-trafficking in persons law. Ghazzali said the Malaysian Government intended to present the bill to Parliament and seek passage by June. He also explained the Malaysian Government had reconfirmed its decision to open a government shelter for trafficking victims, had identified the building, and hoped this could be opened in June. Ghazzali added that a senior Malaysian official soon would issue a public statement on Malaysia's commitment to combat trafficking.

¶2. (C) Comment: The Attorney General's Office began drafting the anti-trafficking bill at the end of 2006. In meetings with the AGO drafters, we provided U.S. anti-trafficking legislation as well as references to other countries' laws. The draft is not yet available to us; often we are only able to obtain draft legislation at the time of its introduction in Parliament. Once a bill is tabled, the Parliament can act swiftly on the proposed legislation at the government's direction. The Ambassador, DCM and Embassy officers have persistently lobbied Ghazzali, as well as the AGO and other government offices, for Malaysia to take meaningful anti-TIP actions, particularly the drafting and passage of the much needed law. This behind-the-scenes diplomacy appears to be making progress. We are seeking further information on the developments Ghazzali described.

LAFLEUR